

AFFIDAVIT

I, Tara Ford, Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, being duly sworn, do hereby depose and state:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and have been since April 2022. While employed with the FBI, I have investigated federal criminal violations related to domestic and international terrorism, cyber-crimes and criminal violations related to technology. I have attended the FBI Academy where I was trained on various types of investigative methods and procedures. I have also completed multiple cyber specific courses through the FBI's Accelerated Cyber Training Program.

2. As part of my duties, I am involved in the investigation of Daniel Christian JOHNSON for violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(e), Explosive Materials-Willfully Making a Threat and Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(c), Interstate Communications with Threat to Kidnap or Injure.

PROBABLE CAUSE

Background

3. On July 10, 2024, the FBI's National Threat Operations Center (NTOC) received a tip involving threatening communications on Facebook by Daniel Christian JOHNSON (hereinafter JOHNSON). The threatening posts were targeted towards multiple former students and co-workers of JOHNSON's in the Meridian, MS area. I and other FBI personnel coordinated with Lauderdale County Sherriff's Office (LCSO) officers to identify JOHNSON as the owner of the Facebook account and proceeded to intervene by conducting interviews with JOHNSON and his parents. During the interviews, JOHNSON admitted to making the threats and exhibited concerning behavior; subsequently, mental health professionals were called to consult/evaluate JOHNSON. Upon evaluation, JOHNSON and his parents agreed to admit him into inpatient mental health treatment at the Westway Behavioral Healthcare facility in Laurel. JOHNSON completed two weeks of treatment before withdrawing from the program and returned home to his parent's residence at 1221 64th Court, Meridian, Mississippi (Subject's Premise).

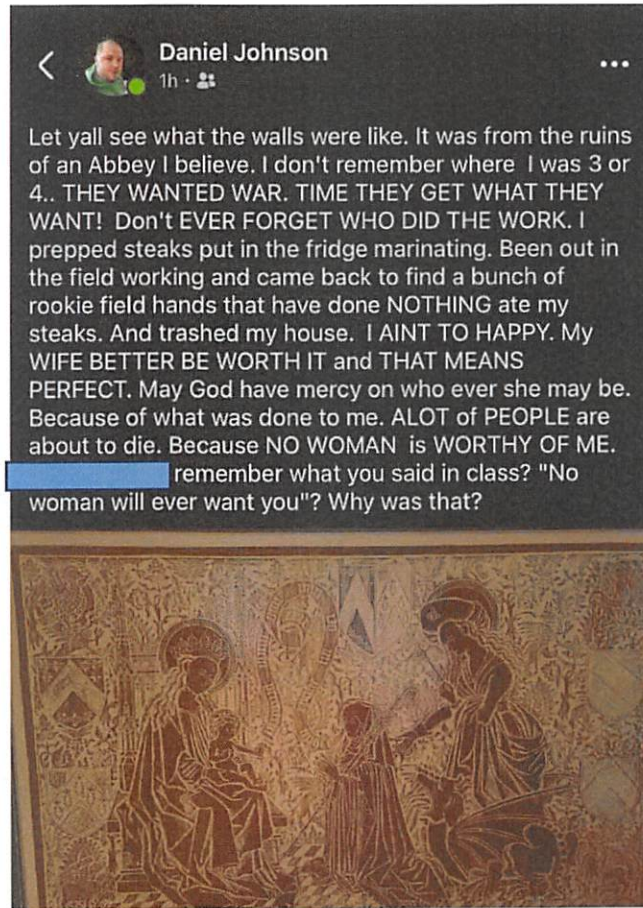
4. On August 28, 2024, LCSO contacted FBI regarding new threatening posts being made by JOHNSON via Facebook. The August 28, 2024, threats were targeted at law enforcement officers, an administrative official at Lauderdale County School District and "the organizations and people that did [him] wrong". Based upon the substance of the posts by JOHNSON, I believe JOHNSON is committing Interstate Communications crimes, and potentially manufacturing explosive materials which are chemical in nature.

5. I know based upon my training and experience that the social media platform Facebook is owned and operated by Meta Platforms, Inc. a corporation based in Menlo Park, California. I know that Facebook is an instrument used to share information and facilitate communications that affect interstate and foreign commerce. Additionally, I know that by its

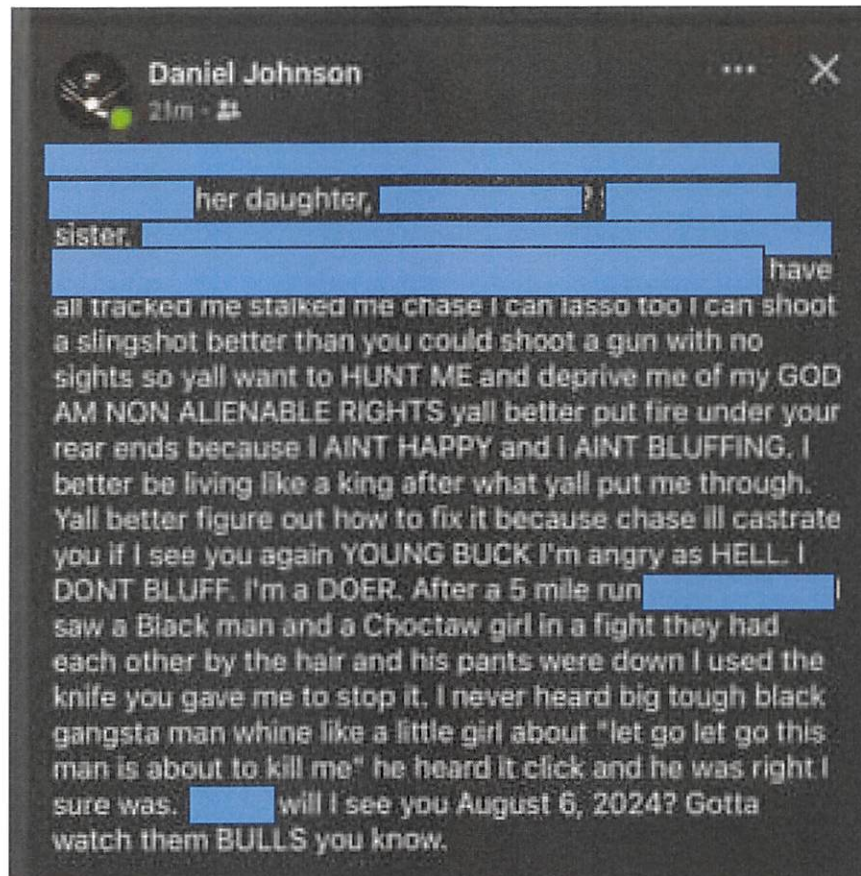
very nature, Facebook is capable of transmitting information and communications in and through interstate and foreign commerce.

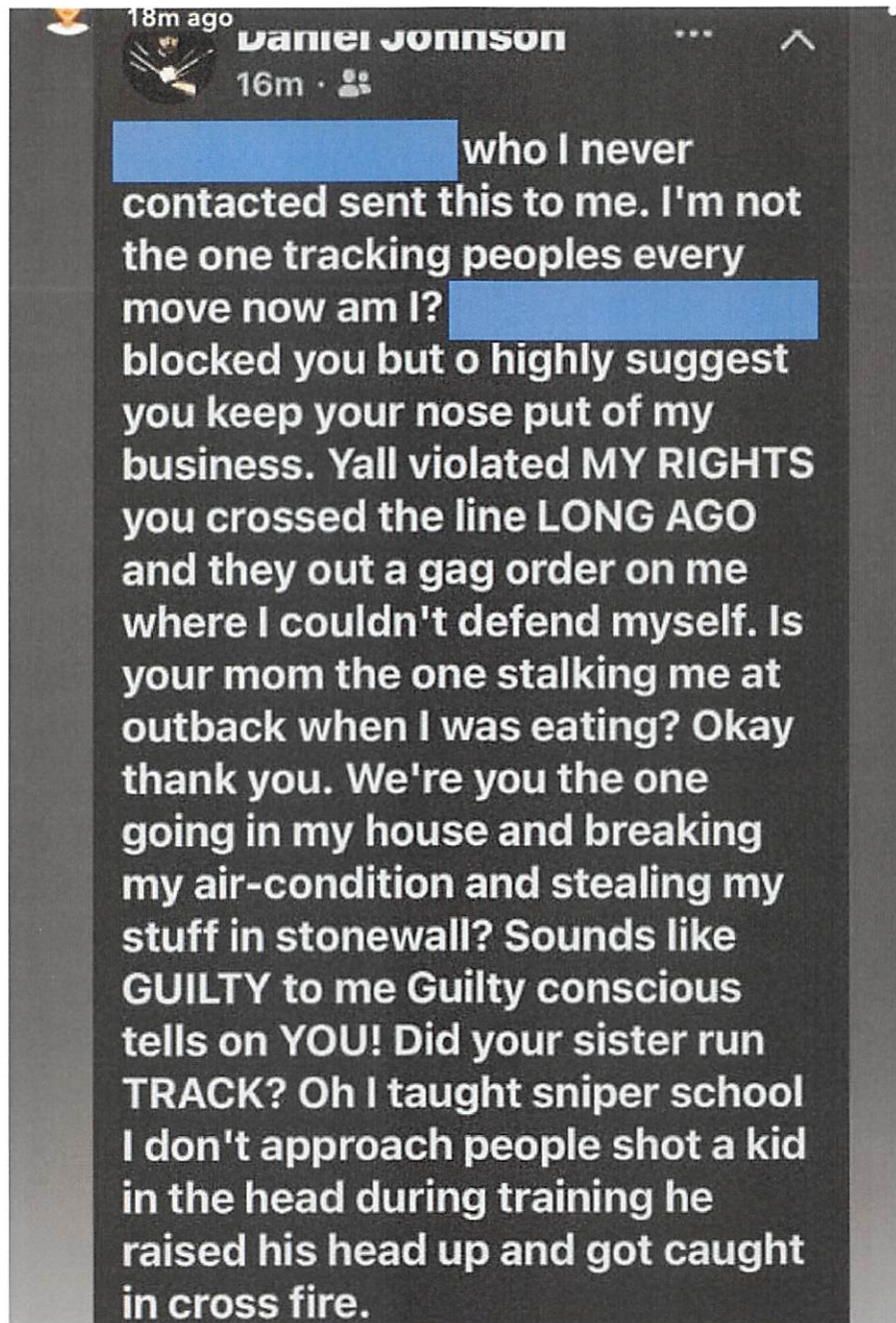
Past Threats

6. On July 10, 2024, the FBI's National Threat Operations Center (NTOC) received a tip involving threatening communications via Facebook by JOHNSON. The threatening posts were targeted towards multiple former students and co-workers of JOHNSON's in the Meridian area. The posts include mention of "war," past acts of violence including shooting a child in the head, alleged "sniper school" training and proficiency with a firearm, threats to "kill" another by "stabbing in the jugular." JOHNSON's posts also include threats to commit wide-scale acts of violence, threatening that "ALOT of PEOPLE are about to die." (emphasis in original). Screenshots of JOHNSON's Facebook post and the above-mentioned posts are shown below¹:

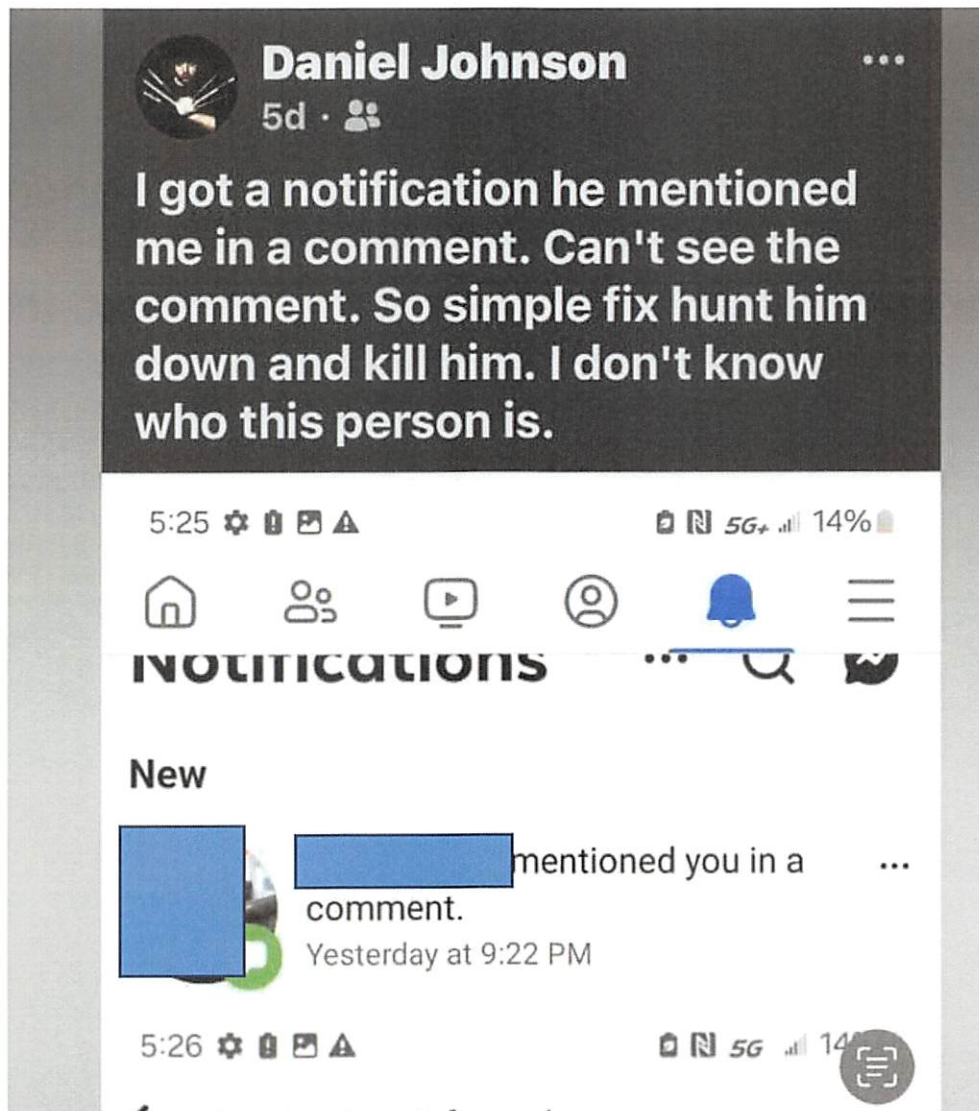


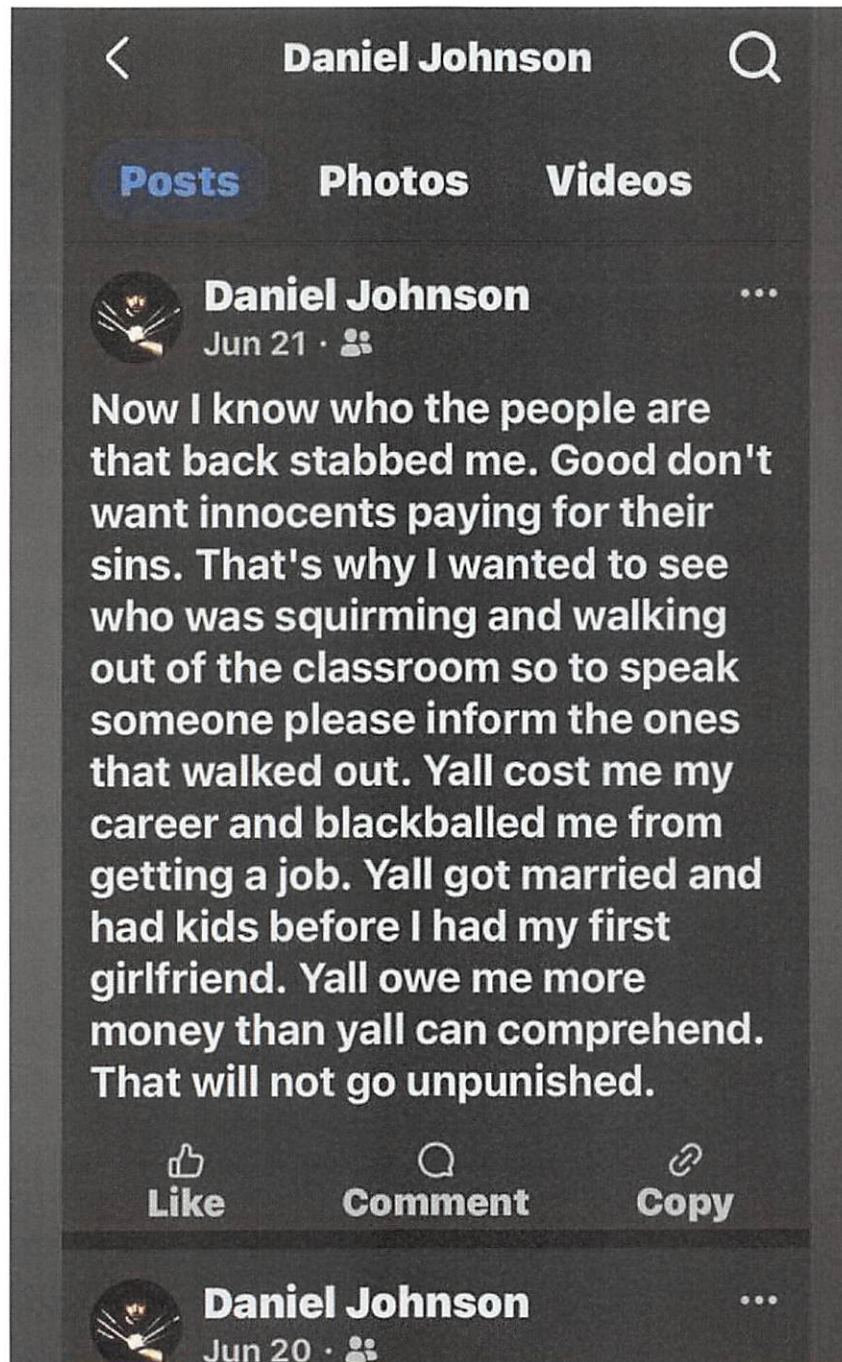
¹ The names of individuals referenced in the Facebook posts have been redacted.



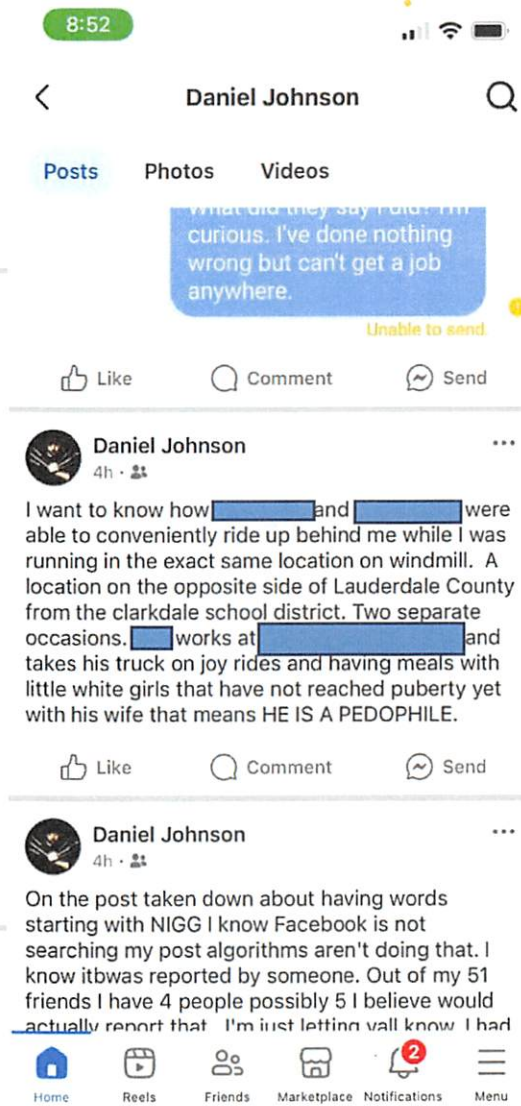












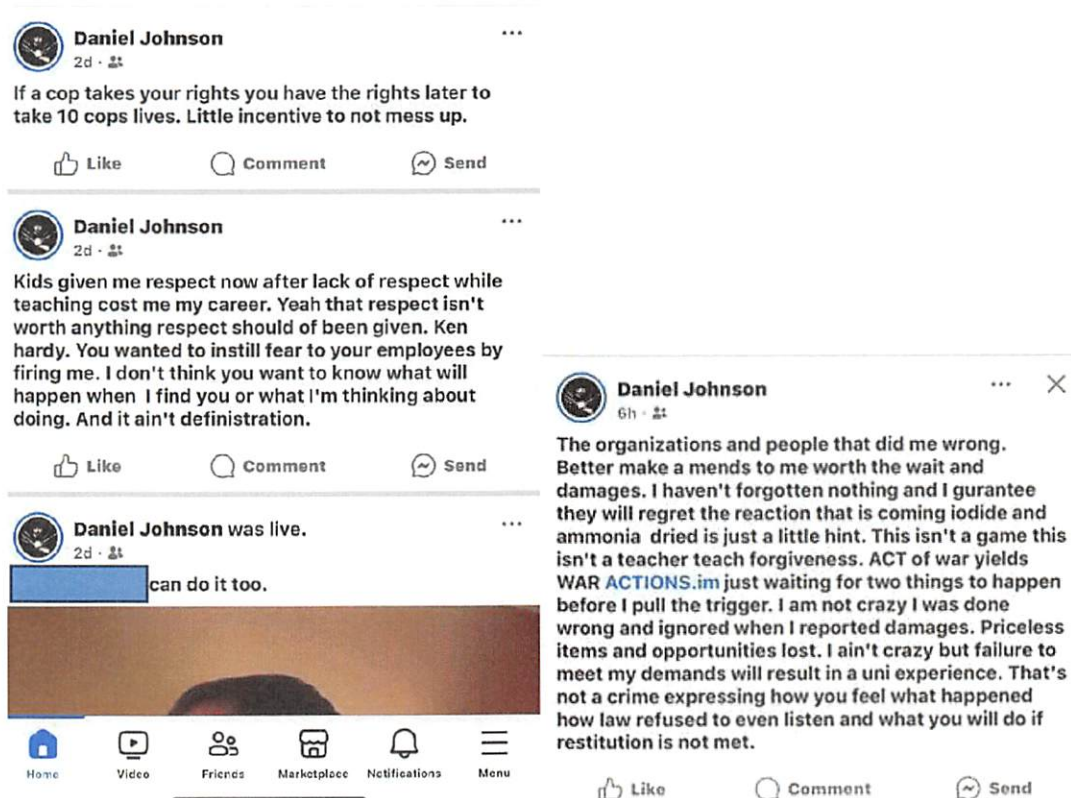


7. I and other FBI personnel coordinated with Lauderdale County Sherriff's Office (LCSO) officers to identify JOHNSON as the owner of the Facebook account and proceeded to intervene by conducting interviews with JOHNSON and his parents. During the interviews, JOHNSON admitted to making the above threats using his personal Facebook account. During this course of interaction with JOHNSON, law enforcement officials reached out to mental health professionals concerning JOHNSON's behavior. Both JOHNSON and his father agreed for JOHNSON to be evaluated by mental health professionals at the LCSO. Mental health

professionals from the Weems Crisis Services were contacted and agreed to evaluate JOHNSON at the LCSO. Upon evaluation, mental health professionals deemed in-patient care should be made available to JOHNSON. JOHNSON was transported to Westway Behavioral Healthcare facility in Laurel, Mississippi, by LCSO. JOHNSON went to in-patient treatment, was released, and returned to the Subject Premises in Meridian, Mississippi. I later learned that JOHNSON completed only two weeks of the inpatient program.

The August 2024 Threats

8. On August 28, 2024, LCSO contacted FBI regarding new threatening posts being made by JOHNSON via Facebook. These threats included a threat to “take 10 cops lives,” the manufacturing of an improvised explosive device using “iodide and ammonia,” committing “acts of war,” and “pull[ing] the trigger.” All of the posts appear to be made with the same undertone of vengeance towards former co-workers and students that was present in the posts made before JOHNSON’s inpatient treatment. Screenshots of the Facebook posts of JOHNSON are provided below:






9. After the posts were made on the Facebook profile of JOHNSON, LCSO received calls and complaints from citizens regarding the threats being made by JOHNSON. Due to the prior threats targeting the members of Clarkdale High School and JOHNSON's prior knowledge of the campus, Lauderdale County School District also raised concerns and requested additional law enforcement presence to ensure the safety of students and faculty alike.

10. I consulted with FBI Special Agent Bomb Technician Team Lead, Brian Barrow, regarding the chemical mixture referenced in JOHNSON's post. SABT Barrow spoke with a Chemist in the Explosives Unit at the FBI Laboratory who confirmed, Iodine and Ammonia

mixed together can produce the primary explosive Nitrogen Triiodide. He also stated the explosive is usually stored under water until use or it can explode with little or no input. As an improvised explosive it is extremely sensitive to all forms of energy input (i.e., heat, friction, impact, shock, and electrostatic discharge).

11. On August 28, 2024, I applied for and was granted a search warrant for the known residence of JOHNSON at 1221 64th Court, Meridian, MS. The same day, I and other law enforcement officers executed the search warrant for the subject premises. During the search of the subject premises, Agents discovered suspicious items that appeared to be components of explosive devices or materials/chemicals used for the manufacturing of explosives. Those items are presently being analyzed by SABB Barrow and other FBI personnel.

12. With the above information, I, FBI Special Agent Tara Ford, request that an arrest warrant be issued for Daniel Christian JOHNSON for violating Title 18, United States Code, Section 844(e), Explosive Materials-Willfully Making a Threat and Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(c), Interstate Communications with Threat to Kidnap or Injure.


Tara Ford
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 4th day of Sept., 2024.


UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE